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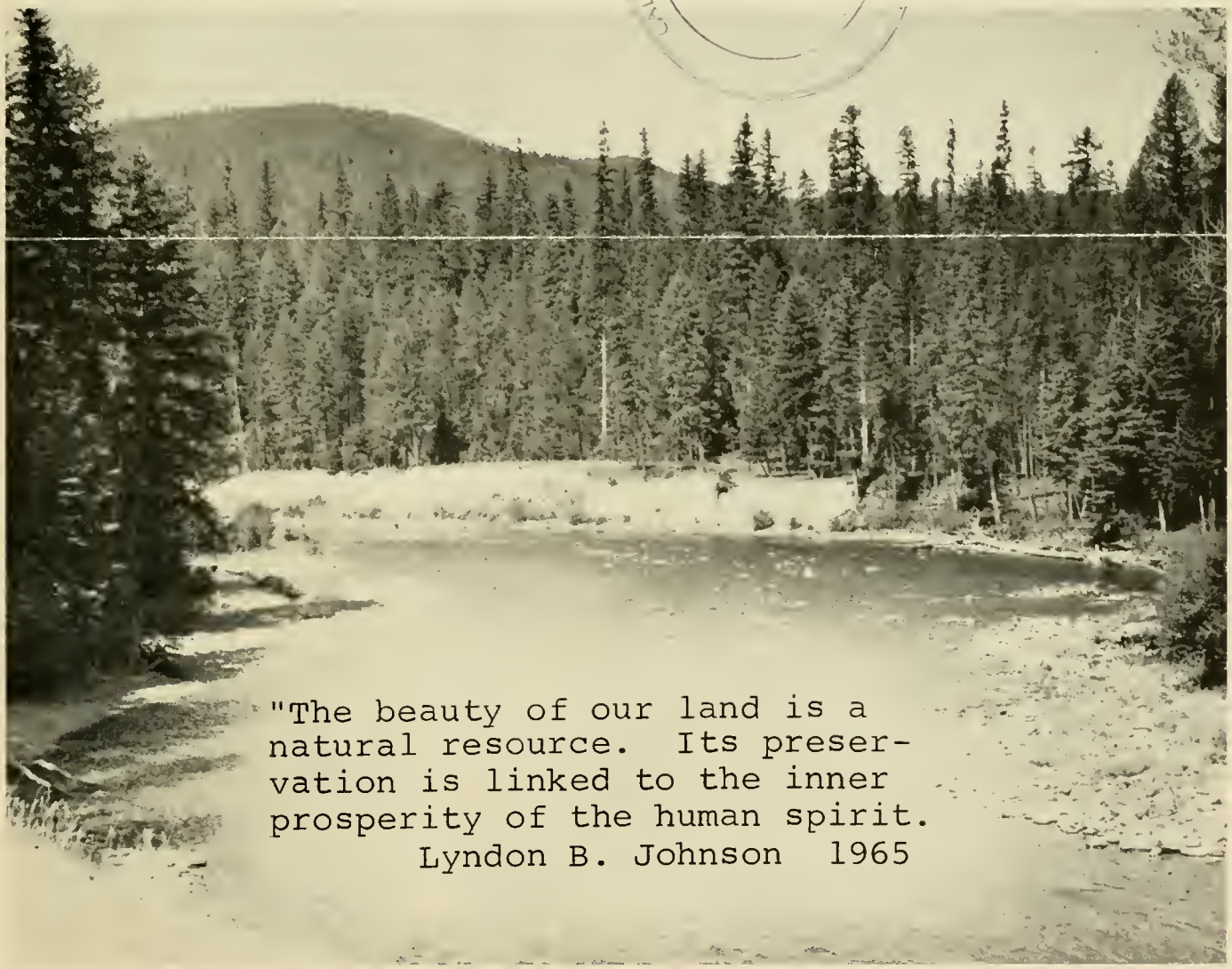
RAVAGE THE RIVER

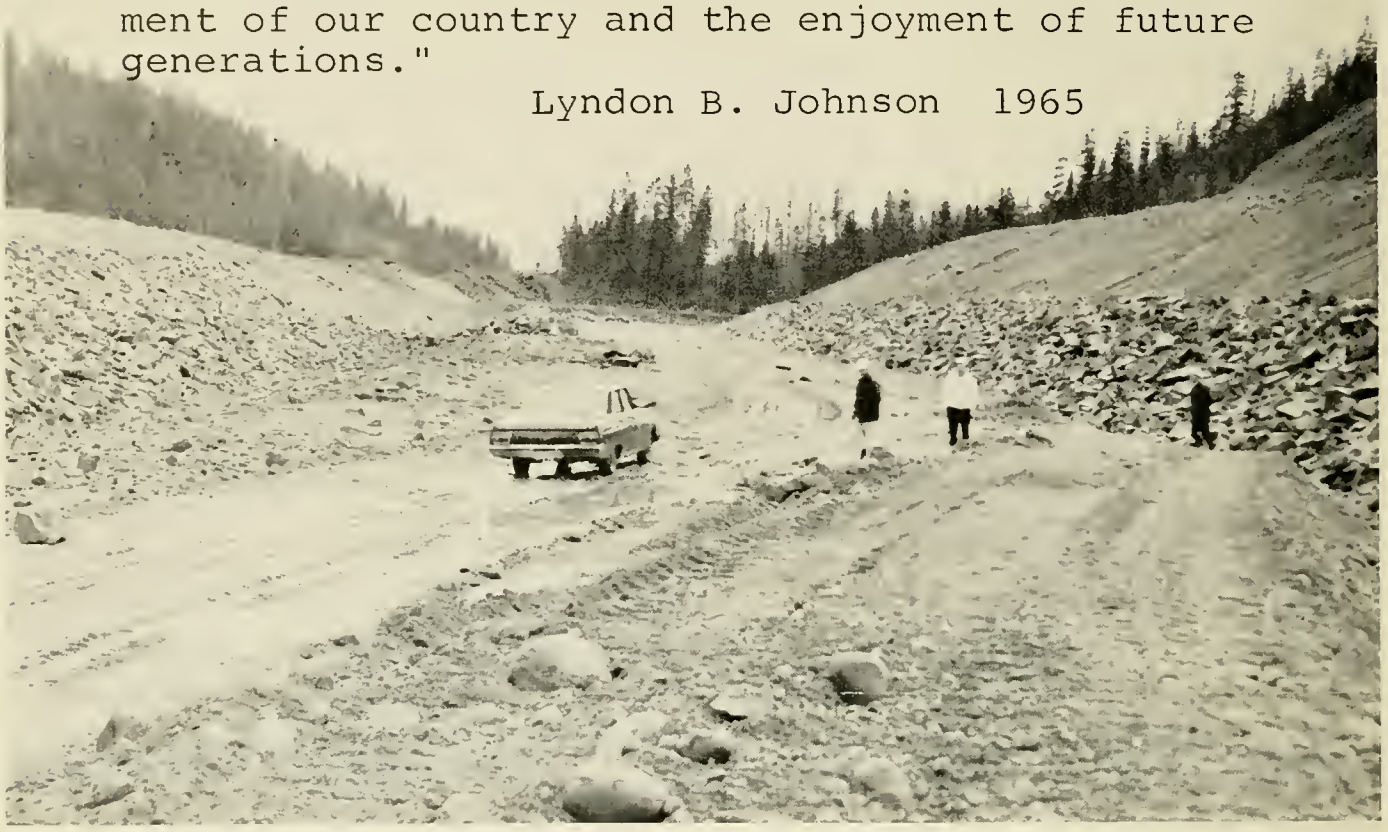
CALIFORNIA RESOURCES AUG


"The beauty of our land is a
natural resource. Its preser-
vation is linked to the inner
prosperity of the human spirit.
Lyndon B. Johnson 1965

The Fisher River 1965 B.C. (Before Construction)

"It is true that we have often been careless with our natural bounty. At times we have paid a heavy price for this neglect. But once our people were aroused to the danger, we have acted to preserve our resources for the enrichment of our country and the enjoyment of future generations."

Lyndon B. Johnson 1965



Preparing the Fisher River for the "enjoyment of future generations."

RAVAGE THE RIVER

Prior to the 1963 session of Montana's State Legislature, the state was buzzing with activity that centered around Montana's stream fishing resource. Led by the Jaycees, numerous groups such as sportsmens' clubs, civic groups, garden clubs, and just plain citizens joined the battle and saw through to passage the first legislation that protected trout streams from physical destruction. It wasn't easy. This new idea was controversial, the debate was heated, and the Bill as finally passed carried a two-year expiration date.

Between the 1963 and 1965 sessions of the legislature these citizens groups continued their efforts while legislators and government administrators watched the workings of the temporary law. The interim effort and obvious benefits resulting from the law were so impressive that an improved "Stream Preservation Bill" was passed by the 1965 Legislature with only a single dissenting vote in both houses.

That battle was won, but the war is far from over. The bucket that contains Montana's stream fishing resource is full of holes, and although some of the major leaks are plugged, the drain continues. The accompanying photographs depict the U.S. Army Corps of

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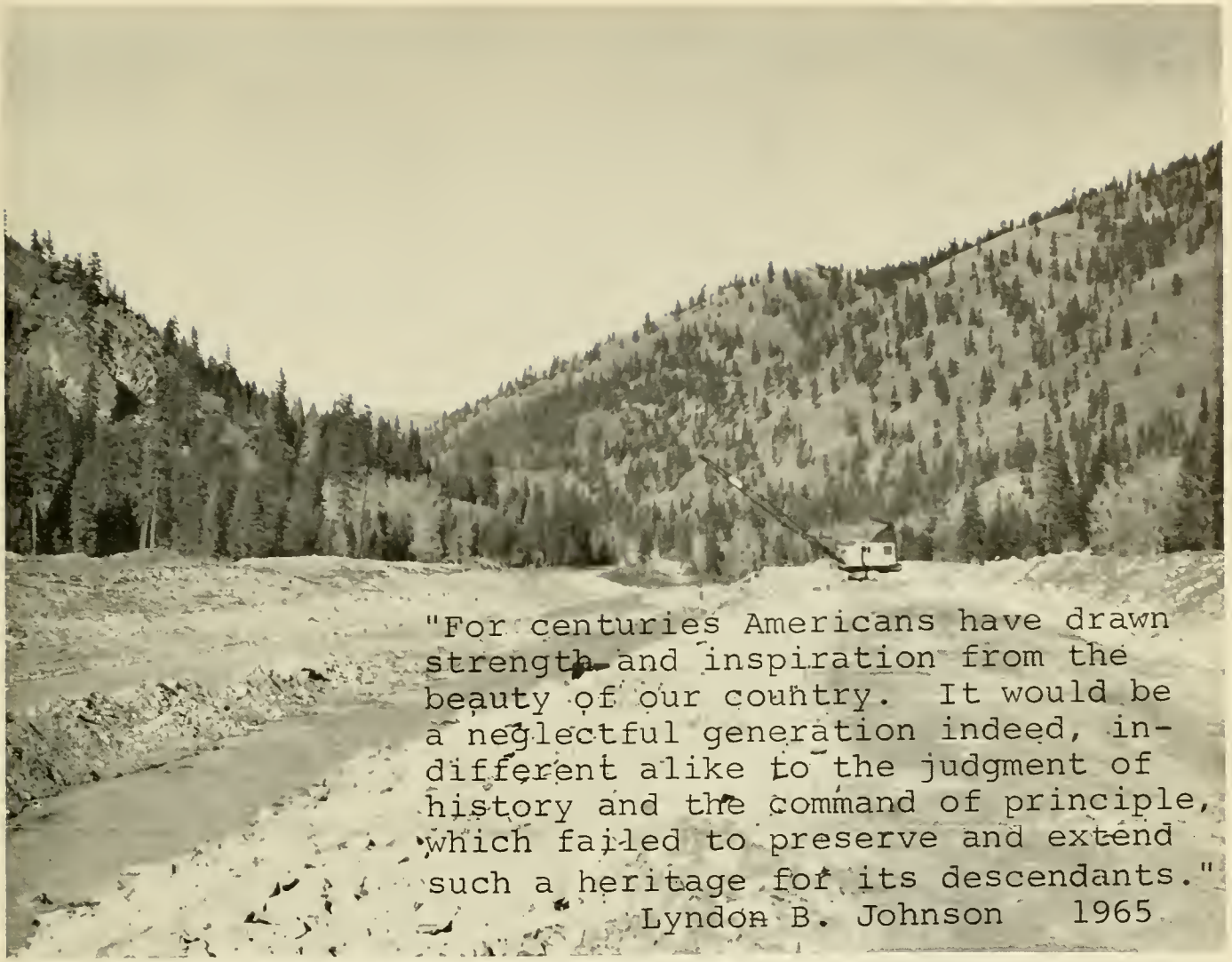

"For centuries Americans have drawn strength and inspiration from the beauty of our country. It would be a neglectful generation indeed, indifferent alike to the judgment of history and the command of principle, which failed to preserve and extend such a heritage for its descendants."
Lyndon B. Johnson 1965

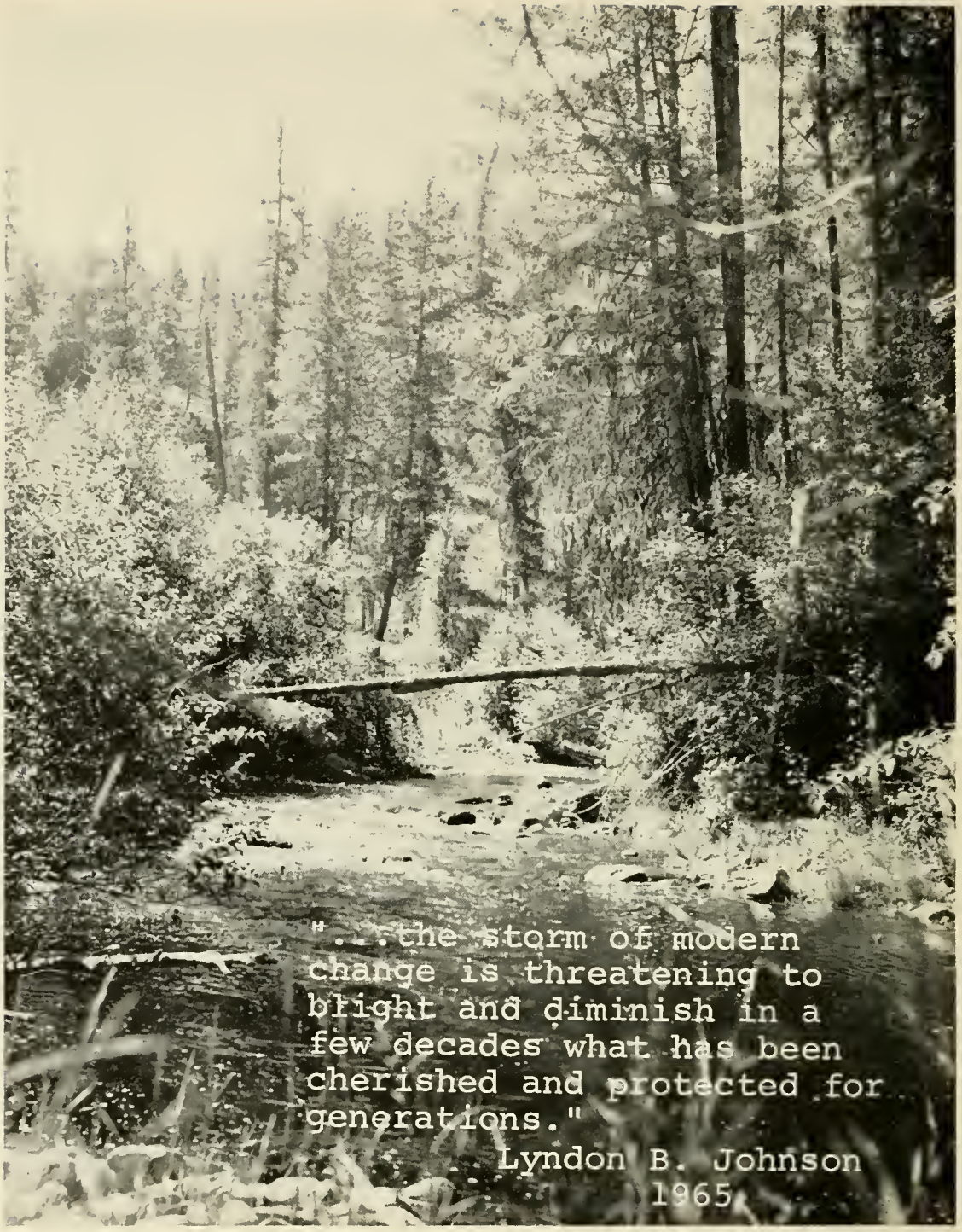
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers working on a channel change of Montana's Fisher River to accommodate the Great Northern Railway.

Engineers at work in 1966. They are in the process of relocating the Great Northern Railroad and their victim is your Fisher River.

Since the Corps is not an agency of state government the provisions of our Stream Preservation Law do not apply to them. The intent of Montana's citizens as reflected in their legislature is apparently of little or no concern to them. Instead the Federal Government when operating in Montana brings along its own set of ground rules. These rules in this instance are known as the "Wildlife Co-ordination Act." Under these rules, each day that a fisherman uses the river in question is worth about $3.00—the river itself apparently is without value. If the "fisherman days" total up to less than the additional cost of building the railroad away from the stream, good-by stream, good-by Fisher River.

Now that the Fisher River is destroyed you might suspect the neighboring Wolf Creek would assume a higher value since the supply of trout streams has been further diminished. Not so under federal ground rules and Wolf Creek goes this summer. The Wildlife Coordination Act, while purporting to serve fish and wildlife, in this case is used to justify the destruction of its habitat. The Fisher River is dying testimony to the ineffectiveness of this act when applied by unquestioning bureaucrats.

The fight to preserve Montana's once rich stream fishing resource is far from over. It can only be won by increased public concern and renewed vigor by those who fought so well before.



In "Death Row"—Wolf Creek will be the next stream sacrificed to the Great Northern Railroad relocation. This stream lost its right to exist because it couldn't muster enough man-days of use at $3.00 each to justify its existence under provisions of the Wildlife Coordination Act.

Flathead Lake State Park

In the late 1940's a group of citizens in Polson known as the Good Fellowship Club decided that a recreation area was needed on Flathead Lake. They were ambitious individuals and by combining their efforts they were able to accomplish many things for the good of the City of Polson and the entire Flathead Valley.

To get a recreation area established on the lake, the club first of all had to locate land that was suitable and that might be made available. Some of the members recalled some state ground that was adjacent to the lake and was located on the Big Arm of Flathead Lake approximately fifteen miles north of Polson on U.S. Highway 93.

This land was under the administration of the State Land Board and, with nothing but success on their minds, the club prevailed upon the Land Board to set aside a strip of ground 200 feet deep along a mile of shore frontage.

The next step, of course, was to get some facilities in the park. With perseverance, some luck, willing hands and know-how, a few of the barest facilities were located and installed and the recreation area was under way.

Realizing that the project would soon grow too large for their group to handle, the Good Fellowship Club next called upon the State Park Commission to take over the project and carry it on as a part of the state park system. The Commission realized the value of the club's work and assumed the administration of the area in 1952. It has remained as a part of the park system ever since, and is known as Flathead Lake State Park.

Flathead Lake State Park is now one of four state parks located on the beautiful Flathead Lake. It is the largest of the four parks and accommodates from 250 to 300 people as campers and picnickers nearly every day during the summer months. It is an attractive park and provides a beautiful view of the Mission Mountains to the East.

Facilities in the park include picnic tables, fireplaces, a water system, sanitary facilities, a boat launching ramp and a boat dock. It is a popular park with the tourists as well as local residents from Missoula and the Flathead Valley.

One of the bright spots, so far as the park is concerned, has been the caretaker, Golden Bibee. Mr. Bibee has served the park for many years and has been highly popular with the many visitors that visit there each year. Mr. Bibee always has time for a pleasant word for the visitors and makes them feel at home while they relax and enjoy a vacation in Montana. Sometimes known as the "Poet of the Flathead", he always has a story or two to tell and is most pleased to have anyone enjoy the poems he has written about the Flathead Valley and Flathead Lake.

In April of 1966, the State Land Board added fifty acres to the park area. With this additional land, the Parks Section is making plans to reconstruct the interior roads, install new facilities, expand the water system, enlarge and define the parking areas and add modern flush type restrooms. This work will be accomplished under the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act which provides matching federal funds for projects of this type.

Flathead Lake State Park is an outstanding recreation area. Thanks to the vision of the Good Fellowship Club in Polson and Caretaker Golden Bibee, the park has made many friends for Montana. It is one of the bright spots in the park system of the Montana Fish and Game Department.

FLATHEAD LAKE STUDY UNDER WAY

Flathead Lake is the largest fresh-water lake in western United States and is one of Montana's top-rated fishing waters. Over 125,000 man-days of fishing are spent each year on its 197 square miles of water. The lake has a variety of fish that will satisfy any angler, while the catch of fish per hour ranks with the better fishing areas around the state.

Growing recreational use of this water wonderland has placed a demand on the Fish and Game Department to gather a better knowledge of its fishes and the many things that influence them. The lake has a great potential for providing even more fishing and recreational opportunities for the future.

Cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden and whitefish grow up in the lake and as adults they then migrate up many tributaries of the lake and river on spawning runs. During the migrations they make up an important part of the fishing in areas such as the Bob Marshall Wilderness, Flathead National Forest, and Glacier National Park.

The past November the Fish and Game Department purchased a boat and equipment that can

The boat used for research is equipped for heavy weather, and heavy work.

take on the job of working on such a large body of water. The type of equipment to do all seasons' work includes booms and winches that are heavy enough to lift hundreds of pounds of wet netting and a drum to handle nets and trawls. Storms on the 30 mile long lake can kick up waves taller than a man and this large boat can withstand rough waters easily. Work on the lake to date has demonstrated that the boat certainly will be able to take all of the weather Flathead Lake can dish out.

Understanding all of the many biological, physical and chemical facets of the sport fishes in the lake is the major objective of this project. Initially the early work is centered around the development of techniques for taking small samples, specific sizes of fish, and specific species of fish.

An inventory of Flathead Lake fish populations includes relative abundance of different species and seasonal distribution in various parts of the lake. Yearly changes or trends in the harvest of fish are being determined. Spawning areas of these fish will be located and studied.

Physical features of the lake such as depths, gravel bar areas, water currents, and temperatures are being recorded and analyzed. Chemical analysis of the water is undertaken at all seasons and is a never ending task.

Some of the very specific, intricate, and academic programs on the lake will be carried out in cooperation with Universities and other institutions. These include some phases of water chemistry, water currents, fish food organisms, parasitism and many other facets of fish life in Flathead Lake. This sort of information is very important in the management of the lake's fishery.

Catching samples of fish is perhaps the toughest nut to crack, since fish of a particular size or species will be needed. A great deal of information must be collected on young fish. At least four different methods of fish capture will be used to get samples. These are gill netting, purse seining, trawling at mid depths and beach seining. Early work indicates that most of the fish needed for information congregate at mid depths. This promises to be a tough problem to solve. Tagging of fish caught will also be accomplished to fill in gaps of needed information.

A shorter time between bites is the main thought behind all this work. Life history facts and other information obtained will help fish workers to maintain and improve the native and introduced species. Cutthroat trout, Dolly Varden, kokanee salmon, lake trout, bass and lake whitefish are the main species now under study.

Of particular interest to most fishermen is the changing size of mature kokanee (sockeye salmon) from year to year. The influences of food, competition, spawning success and other factors are under study and knowledge will perhaps help control this changing size. Utilization of this salmon is an important management tool and effects of catch on numbers and size will be studied.

Kokanee salmon represent about 75 per cent of the fish caught by fishermen and a great deal of effort will be spent on this species. Reproduction is a key to all species of fish and this phase of the life of the salmon will receive attention. The important association of this fish to temperatures and depths results in a considerable influence on the fishermen's catch. This study should provide considerable knowledge on these influences.

Considerable effort in the past has been expended to locate spawning areas of cutthroat trout in tributary streams. Much more needs to be known about their life in the lake itself. Where do they spend most of their time? What are their food habits, their growth rates, and the catch rate of adults?

Bringing gill netting in with a power reel.

Rough fish play various roles in the total story of any lake and a great deal must be learned about them also. Some of these do provide food for large predatory fish like the Dolly Varden and lake trout, but too many rough fish can create problems.

The Fish and Game Department is aware of the outstanding fishery and recreation potential of Flathead Lake and has started an extensive program to develop these to their optimum. Information gathered over the next several years will contribute to the successful management and help considerably to maintain and enhance this vital fishery as use becomes greater and greater.

THE MONTANA SPORTSMAN'S LICENSE

A rain of protest letters have recently fallen upon the Fish and Game Department in response to a newspaper article which originated outside the department. The article aimed at describing 1931 as the first year in which a Montana "Sportsman's License" was issued but somehow the story fell short of its mark and, judging from our mailbag, left the impression that the first hunting and fishing license of any kind was issued in 1931.

As our correspondents have pointed out, "tain't so!" The first Montana Hunting Licenses were issued in 1901. They were required only of non-residents who did not pay taxes of some sort or another in the state. The first resident licenses required for the taking of fish or game were given birth in 1905. This license was sort of a family affair and provided that a license ". . . issued to the head of a family shall include therein all female members of his family, as well as all male members thereof under 21 years of age." It provided also that ". . . nothing in this act shall prevent a bona fide resident of this state from hunting in his own field during the open season, or fishing in the waters running through the same or adjacent thereto, without first obtaining a license thereof."

In 1931 there were a couple important changes in the license structure, the big game license was split from the bird and fishing license, and a "Sportsman's License" was first offered. The 1931 Biennial report of the Fish and Game Commission included a somewhat dismal report on the reduction of fish and game forces because of skimpy income to the department. During that year, almost 2,000 Sportsman's Licenses were sold at $5.00 each. This license apparently was carried for sale through 1946.

$5.00 MONTANA $5.00

SPORTSMAN'S LICENSE

In compliance with laws of Montana of the legislative assembly of 1931 this Sportsman's License signifying that the holder has paid $5.00, or more than the required fee for hunting and fishing prescribed by law, is issued by the Montana State Fish and Game Department. This document signifies that the holder has more than a commercial interest in fish and game.

No. 426 1943

STATE OF MONTANA
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

Name
Citizen of U. S.? Bonafide resident?
Resident
P. O. Address
Business or Occupation
Age Height Weight
Color of Eyes Hair
Issued by
At , County of
Date
State of Montana, }
County of } ss.

Being duly sworn, the undersigned deposes and says that he has answered all questions above and that the same are true.

Signature of Applicant

Subscribed and sworn to before me this day of , 1943.

Deputy Game Warden.
Justice of the Peace.

Class AAA License No. 426

REPORT OF GAME KILLED

Did you kill an elk during 1942?
County killed in Drainage
Did you kill a deer during 1942?
County killed in Drainage

STATE FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT
HELENA, MONTANA

LAW PROVIDES PENALTY for failure to mail this card in at close of big game season, whether you make a kill or not.

I hereby make report as follows for 1943 1943

County where deer was killed
Date killed Sex
On Forest Reserve? Range Condition
County where elk was killed

An earlier version of the Sportsman's License

1967 Montana Sportsman's License

No.

THE HOLDER of this license is dedicated to the ideal of understanding and friendship between landowner and recreationist. Courtesy, consideration and common sense are the keys.

$20.00 No. $20.00

AAA Montana Sportsman's License 1967

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY STATE ZIP CODE
BIRTH DATE HEIGHT WEIGHT SEX EYES HAIR

Age 12 thru 17 — Certificate of Competency No.

RESIDENT ☐ I HEREBY DECLARE THAT I AM A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA WHO HAS BEEN A RESIDENT OF THE STATE OF MONTANA FOR A PERIOD OF SIX (6) MONTHS IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO MAKING APPLICATION FOR SAID LICENSE.

ARMED FORCES ☐ I HEREBY DECLARE THAT I, OR A MEMBER OF MY IMMEDIATE FAMILY, IS IN THE ARMED FORCES AND HAVE BEEN ON ACTIVE DUTY IN MONTANA FOR THE PAST THIRTY (30) DAYS. ASSIGNMENT ORDERS WILL VERIFY

I HEREBY AFFIRM THAT THE ABOVE STATEMENTS ARE TRUE AND CORRECT.

SIGNATURE OF LICENSEE X

SIGNATURE OF LICENSE AGENT

CLASS AAA
Valid May 1, 1967 thru April 30, 1968

MONTANA FISH AND GAME COMMISSION
SECRETARY

THE TAG MUST IMMEDIATELY BE DETACHED, SIGNED, DATE AND MONTH CUT OUT AND AFFIXED TO THE CARCASS FOLLOWING KILL. DO NOT DETACH BEFORE.

COUNTY OF KILL 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
ADDRESS
NAME
SEPT. OCT. NOV. DEC. JAN.

Current Version of the Sportsman's License.

The license was arranged to fold into four sections. The first section was the designation which, in part, declared ". . . This document signifies that the holder has more than a commercial interest in fish and game." The second section was a description of the holder, the third was a return postcard to be sent to the department stating details of game killed by the bearer, and the fourth section was made up of one deer tag and one elk tag to be attached to the animal immediately after the kill.

The 1967 version of the Sportsman's License is printed on a heavy water resistant material in attractive green, brown, and red. This license, too, represents an investment for sportsmen whose interests in conservation include more than the immediate privileges that come with hunting or fishing licenses.

Each Sportsman's License buyer will be given an attractive decal. The decal will bear the owner's Sportsman's license number. It is expected that landowners will come to recognize the owners of the decals as "good risks"—persons who respect the property and rights of landowners. A card portion of the license may be clipped and carried in a billfold or purse. This card identifies the holder as someone with a special interest in maintaining good will with landowners.

The Sportsman's License now available at fish and game offices or from game wardens, authorizes the holder to hunt game birds, to fish, and to take one deer, one elk, and one black bear. The purchase price of these licenses would total $12.00 under regular sales. The additional "investment" cost of the Sportsman's License will be used in programs to better relations between landowners and recreationists, to provide access to recreation spots, and for certain acquisition programs.

MONTANA
MONTANA FISH AND GAME DEPARTMENT

Helena, Montana 59601
Return Requested

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